

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 097 752

EA 005 880

AUTHOR Coppock, Nan; Templeton, Ian
TITLE Paraprofessionals. NAESP School Leadership Digest Series, Number Seven. ERIC/CEM Research Analysis Series, Number Nine.
INSTITUTION National Association of Elementary School Principals, Washington, D.C.; Oregon Univ., Eugene. ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management.
SPONS AGENCY National Inst. of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE 74
CONTRACT OEC-0-8-080353-3514
NOTE 32p.; A related document is EA 005 879
AVAILABLE FROM National Association of Elementary School Principals, 1801 North Moore Street, Arlington, Virginia 22209 (\$24.00 plus postage. Available only as part of series of 13 reports)

EDRS PRICE MF-\$0.75 HC-\$1.85 PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS *Cost Effectiveness; *Differentiated Staffs; Educational Change; Educational Finance; Legal Problems; *Paraprofessional School Personnel; Resource Staff Role; School Law; Staff Role; *Staff Utilization; Subprofessionals; *Teacher Aides; Teacher Attitudes

ABSTRACT

This paper outlines the history of paraprofessionals and reviews the reasons for their use. However, its main focus is on the specific ways in which these people are currently being used in the schools. The authors discuss the two major kinds of paraprofessionals -- service-oriented and instructional -- and analyze the various methods that have been proposed for selecting, training, and certifying them. The legal aspects of paraprofessional programs are covered, and the sometimes delicate relationship between paraprofessionals and teachers is explored. A selected bibliography is included. (Author)

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

ED097752

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

Paraprofessionals

School Leadership digest

**Nan Coppock
Ian Templeton**

Prepared by
ERIC Clearinghouse on
Educational Management

Published by
National Association of
Elementary School Principals

EA 003 880

Library of Congress Catalog Number: 74-80571
NAESP School Leadership Digest Series, Number Seven
ERIC/CEM Accession Number: EA 005 880
ERIC/CEM Research Analysis Series, Number Nine

Printed in the United States of America, 1974
National Association of Elementary School Principals
1801 North Moore Street
Arlington, Virginia 22209

The material in this publication was prepared pursuant to a contract with the National Institute of Education, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. Contractors undertaking such projects under government sponsorship are encouraged to express freely their judgment in professional and technical matters. Prior to publication, the manuscript was submitted to the National Association of Elementary School Principals for critical review and determination of professional competence. This publication has met such standards. Points of view or opinions, however, do not necessarily represent the official view or opinions of either the National Association of Elementary School Principals or the National Institute of Education.

CONTENTS

Foreword	v
Introduction	1
Assessing the Benefits of a Paraprofessional Program	3
Easing the Budget	3
Improving the Curriculum	4
Providing Needed Help	4
Two Types of Paraprofessional Aid	6
Service-Oriented Paraprofessionals	6
Instructional Paraprofessionals	9
Aide Selection: Avoiding Arbitrary Restrictions	12
The Elderly	13
Students—Fast and Slow Learners	14
Convicted Felons: An Exception	15
Business People, Academicians, and Housewives	15
To Pay or Not to Pay	16
Problems and Concerns: Relationships, Certification, and the Law	17
Relationships with Teachers	17
Certification of Paraprofessionals	19
Some Legal Problems	20
Conclusion	22
Bibliography	23



The Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) is a national information system operated by the National Institute of Education. ERIC serves the educational community by disseminating educational research results and other resource information that can be used in developing more effective educational programs.

The ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management, one of several clearinghouses in the system, was established at the University of Oregon in 1966. The Clearinghouse and its companion units process research reports and journal articles for announcement in ERIC's index and abstract bulletins.

Research reports are announced in *Resources in Education (RIE)*, available in many libraries and by subscription for \$38 a year from the United States Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402. Most of the documents listed in *RIE* can be purchased through the ERIC Document Reproduction Service, operated by Computer Microfilm International Corporation.

Journal articles are announced in *Current Index to Journals in Education. CIJE* is also available in many libraries and can be ordered for \$44 a year from Macmillan Information, 866 Third Avenue, New York, New York 10022. Annual and semiannual cumulations can be ordered separately.

Besides processing documents and journal articles, the Clearinghouse has another major function—information analysis and synthesis. The Clearinghouse prepares bibliographies, literature reviews, state-of-the-knowledge papers, and other interpretive research studies on topics in its educational area.

FOREWORD

With the *School Leadership Digest* series, the National Association of Elementary School Principals adds another project to its continuing program of publications designed to offer school leaders essential information on a wide range of critical concerns in education.

The *School Leadership Digest* is a series of monthly reports on top priority issues in education. At a time when decisions in education must be made on the basis of increasingly complex information, the *Digest* provides school administrators with concise, readable analyses of the most important trends in schools today, as well as points up the practical implications of major research findings.

By special cooperative arrangement, the series draws on the extensive research facilities and expertise of the ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management. The titles in the series were planned and developed cooperatively by both organizations. Utilizing the resources of the ERIC network, the Clearinghouse is responsible for researching the topics and preparing the copy for publication by NAESP.

The authors of this report, Nan Coppock and Ian Templeton, are employed by the Clearinghouse as a research analyst and writer and an associate editor, respectively.

Paul L. Houts
Director of Publications
NAESP

Stuart C. Smith
Assistant Director and Editor
ERIC/CEM

INTRODUCTION

In 1968 people were writing articles with such titles as "The Teacher Aide . . . An Answer to the Teacher Shortage." Only five years later, *The Graduate: A Handbook for Leaving Schools* predicted that 70 percent of graduating kindergarten and elementary teachers and 40 percent of those earning secondary teaching certificates would *not* find jobs in the public schools. On a scale ranging from "Excellent" to "Good Luck—You'll Need It," job-finding prospects at the elementary and secondary levels were given ratings of "Good Luck" and "Grim," respectively.

For 1974 *The Graduate* makes no percentage predictions concerning elementary teachers, and those at the secondary level have joined the "Good Luck" ranks. Nationwide, some educators estimate there are two certified teachers for every teaching position.

To say that we no longer have a teacher shortage is an understatement. With this critical oversupply of teachers, it seems fair to ask what place—if any—the descendants of teacher aides have in today's schools. First, a brief review of their history.

Paraprofessionals were introduced into education in 1948 as part of the much-publicized Michigan Project. The fifties and sixties saw widespread use of teachers' aides as part of an attempt to keep up with booming enrollments. Teachers' aides were handed tasks regarded as "nonprofessional." Stated positively, aides saved teachers from hours of paperwork, lunch money collection, and other necessary but time-consuming duties. Put another way, aides were the dumping ground for many of the undesirable parts of a teacher's workload.

It is not known when—or by whom—the term *paraprofessional* was first used, but its application to the field of education is worth examining. Other names for paraprofessionals

are "auxiliary school personnel," "educational assistants," "teacher aides," and "education technicians." The title paraprofessional may have certain psychological effects: greater prestige for the aides, reassurance to parents that their children are in competent hands, and implied recognition by educators of the close relationship between aides and teachers, to name a few.

The exact nature of the paraprofessional/professional relationship is not agreed on, however. Webster has not yet acknowledged the existence of paraprofessionals, leaving us to choose among several meanings for the prefix *para* (assuming a consensus on the meaning of *professional*). Depending on our prejudices, or lack of them, we may choose to focus on the paraprofessional's "difference" from or on his "resemblance" or "subordination" to the professional. The definition used in this paper recognizes that paraprofessionals work *beside, alongside of, or with* others. Mutual respect and open communication are imperative for a close working relationship between paraprofessionals and professionals.

In the light of the nation's oversupply of teachers, it may seem that we have gone far afield in trying to determine whether there is a place for paraprofessionals in education. But the key to that answer lies in our growing awareness of what a paraprofessional is. He or she is not a teacher's aide in the old sense and has a meaningful role to play and a place to occupy alongside professional educators. Since it is estimated that by 1977 there will be 1.5 million paraprofessionals in education, it is time to reexamine who they are and what they do.

The paraprofessional's particular role depends on a number of factors that are discussed in the remainder of this paper. No distinction is made here between volunteer and paid paraprofessionals.

ASSESSING THE BENEFITS OF A PARAPROFESSIONAL PROGRAM

Theoretically, it is easy to answer questions about why a school district might consider the use of paraprofessionals—or any other educational change. The ultimate goal of any educational venture ought to be a successful and meaningful educational experience for students, and every change should improve that educational experience.

On a practical level, however, numerous specific factors—singly or, more likely, in concert with others—provide the impetus for paraprofessional programs. The motivation for a paraprofessional program may arise out of budget problems, a need for improved public relations or staff reorganization, or special consideration for a particular subject area, group of pupils, or group of persons who might become paraprofessionals.

Easing the Budget

In these days of inflationary costs and reluctant taxpayers, when school districts are having difficulty maintaining funding for existing programs let alone new ones, the use of paraprofessionals may be presented as an economic shortcut. It is sometimes suggested that paraprofessional aides can be used in place of higher-paid employees. Ideally, in fact, a district may be able to obtain volunteer aides. However, for both practical and ethical reasons, the use of unpaid aides is becoming less plausible, as we will see later.

One application of a budget-motivated paraprofessional program may be in a school with overcrowded classes. Teachers may prefer that a set sum of money be spent for the salaries of a large number of aides who would help in big classes rather than for the salaries of a small number of teachers whose presence in the school would not have an appreciable effect on class sizes.

Another kind of staff reorganization that can bolster a sick budget is a differentiated staffing program involving the use of paraprofessionals. In place of traditional divisions among faculty, administrators, and staff, some districts are trying to make better use of personnel resources through differentiated staffing. Under many differentiated staffing plans, paraprofessionals and other supportive personnel are brought in to help redistribute the teacher's workload. Again, the temptation is to use paraprofessionals as a means of cutting the percentage of the budget allocated to teacher salaries. That a school district employs paraprofessionals as part of a money-saving effort is not automatic grounds for condemnation, however.

Improving the Curriculum

Curricular needs are another reason for initiating paraprofessional programs. When certain subjects seem to require more attention than a teacher can give, aides may be called on to assist in various ways, for example, sharing planning responsibilities, grading papers, or tutoring individual students.

In addition to being used in such core subject areas as reading and mathematics, paraprofessionals are sometimes employed to provide support in less basic subjects: career study, learning resources, or mental health. Without the use of paraprofessionals, information in these fringe areas might not be available at all. At the very least, paraprofessional help increases the amount and kind of attention given to them.

Providing Needed Help

Besides teachers, paraprofessional programs may focus on either of two groups of people involved—the pupils to be helped and the individuals enlisted to help them. Several categories of pupils require special attention—the mentally and physically handicapped, the culturally disadvantaged, and the bilingual. Paraprofessionals provide a possible source of that attention.

In other cases it is the potential paraprofessionals themselves who have special needs that can be filled through their enlistment in a program. This approach might be used to find a place for "second-class citizen" groups, for example, delinquents, dropouts, and ethnic minorities.

Some districts that are interested in involving parents and community members in the schools are recruiting them as paraprofessionals. In these cases the emphasis may be on either what these people can do for the school or vice versa; hopefully, it will be on both. Paraprofessional programs using personnel whose first loyalties are not to the school often result in improved public relations in the form of more widespread community understanding and support—both morally and financially. Similarly, through their contacts with parents and others, regular school employees may gain a clearer understanding of how the public views the schools.

These are not the only aims of paraprofessional programs, and most programs are multimoivated. That is, a combination of these or other situations provides the impetus for clarifying the use of paraprofessionals. For example, several factors motivated a Wayne County, Michigan, program called Paraprofessional Training Project-R (for Reading). As described in an article of the same name, the cornerstone of the program is concern about:

- the many youngsters with acute reading problems
- the shortage of trained personnel to work individually with poor readers
- the isolation of schools from their local communities
- the area's high level of under- and unemployment

But most significant was the belief in "prevention, not remediation." Whatever a program's goals, it is important that those planning paraprofessional programs establish priorities for the goals and that those in charge of existing programs not lose sight of those priorities.

TWO TYPES OF PARAPROFESSIONAL AID

The question of where and how the paraprofessionals will be used is related to the goals of the school. It makes a difference whether the paraprofessional is to be employed in the cafeteria, the office, the gymnasium, or the classroom. Of course, an aide's responsibilities may be of more than one type; someone employed in a classroom can quite conceivably have some instructional, some clerical, and some service duties.

But there is little point in planning the same type of paraprofessional program for classroom assistants as for those who either never interact with children or do so in a noninstructional environment. Laying aside the personal preferences of aides until later, here we distinguish between two paraprofessional orientations—service and instruction.

Service-Oriented Paraprofessionals

Service-oriented paraprofessionals are not directly involved in the basic educational processes of the school. They include food service workers, aides in physical or mental health, safety aides, and, sometimes, clerical assistants. Some of the most recent and innovative uses of paraprofessionals are found in this area.

Breivogel discusses one program—the Florida Parent Education Follow Through Model—which uses parent educators to work with a target population of “economically deprived, educationally divergent children.” Drawn from the local neighborhoods, the paraprofessionals make frequent home visits and serve as a communication link between home and school. Aides with these kinds of responsibilities act as “socializers.”

Behavior change is another area in which socializing paraprofessionals are used. In a Buddy System Model described

by Fo and O'Donnell, local adults gave social and social/material reinforcement to potential and actual school dropouts as well as to pre- and actual delinquents. The program achieved measured success in dealing with certain target behaviors; those most directly related to the school were classroom disruptions and failure to do homework.

The primary goals of the project were to cut down on truancy and to improve academic achievement. While truancy, like the related target behaviors, did decrease, there was no noticeable effect on academic achievement, at least as measured by grades. The planners of this program attributed the lack of academic improvement to the isolation of the paraprofessionals. That is, if the paraprofessionals had been able to work together with teachers, parents, and others playing significant roles in the lives of the students, far better results could have been expected. This observation is relevant not only to the immediate problem of behavior modification but also to the general use of paraprofessionals. Regardless of specific functions and goals, paraprofessionals cannot be optimally effective unless they can work with others, both professionals (educators) and other nonprofessionals (for example, parents).

In the Buddy System Model, paraprofessionals were used in socializing roles in the hope that behavioral improvements would carry over into the instructional realm. A similar plan is behind a Nutritional Improvement Project reported by Francies and Fleming. Here, Breakfast Aides (neighborhood residents) served breakfast to the pupils in certain schools at the beginning of each day. Like the Buddy System, two of the project's goals were to increase attendance and level of achievement. A third purpose was to develop a receptive attitude toward school.

The results of the project were negligible. The most positive finding was that, over a five-year period, attendance in the schools where students received breakfast did not decline *as much* as it did in those where breakfast was not served. Again, the primary reason for such negligible results is the narrow focus of the program. The distance between the treatment

(better nutrition) and the illness (poor academic achievement) was too great. Furthermore, it does little good to work on a particular problem in a child's environment without also bringing the many other aspects relevant to his situation under some measure of control, also. And that goes for both human and nonhuman aspects of the child's environment.

Counseling is another service area in which paraprofessionals are being used. Numerous articles attest to the need for paraprofessional help by school counselors. For instance, Carlson and Peitrofesa describe a team approach as a means of making more effective use of available personnel. On this team are a counselor, a guidance worker, and paraprofessionals. Guidance, as opposed to counseling, is regarded as directed at more routine types of counseling tasks such as leading small, unstructured discussion groups or conducting individual data-gathering interviews.

Paraprofessionals in this model are supposed to be of "indirect service" to children by performing such tasks as distributing or proctoring standardized tests. But given the definition of paraprofessionals used here, both the guidance workers and the paraprofessionals would fall in the same category. Both are being used to perform guidance and administrative duties in order to allow the professional to do more counseling and consultation.

While no distinction is made here among different types of counseling in schools, it should be noted that the duties of both counselors and those who assist them vary. Academic, emotional, and disciplinary counseling are all interrelated; in some cases a counselor may be expected to act expertly in all these realms simultaneously. It seems likely that paraprofessionals could increase the counselor's effectiveness by their performance of specific tasks in each area.

The counseling profession is following in the footsteps of the teaching profession in that paraprofessionals are being employed as the current solution to a shortage of professional personnel. Because teachers have been there before, however, counselors ought to be able to avoid making some of the same mistakes. For instance, paraprofessional counselors should not

be relegated to doing only the most boring, undesirable parts of a certified counselor's job. Also, aides originally hired because of a counselor shortage should not find themselves out of a useful role when the supply catches up with the demand. Rather, their roles and duties should be flexible enough that they can shift into new but equally necessary ways of working with the professional counselors.

Among the service-oriented paraprofessional fields, physical and mental health are showing the greatest development. Lum identifies six categories of health nonprofessionals: clerical, health room maintenance, monitoring of pupil activities, direct service to pupils, direct assistance to the nurse, and health education. Other paraprofessional roles described in the literature include violence intervention and preventive mental health.

Instructional Paraprofessionals

Instructional paraprofessionals are used in many parts of the curriculum as well as in extracurricular activities. It may seem that instruction affords the most limited opportunities for paraprofessionals. After all, since paraprofessionals are not teachers, they should be expected to do only low-level tasks. But there is just as much room for variety and flexibility in the classroom as outside it. Types of instructional paraprofessionals defined by Canady are classroom or school helper/aides, clerical aides, educational materials assistants, instructional assistants, and school-community paraprofessionals. The titles do not matter, but the differentiation of roles does.

Whether or not Johnny learns to read receives more attention than any other part of the school curriculum, and with good reason. Poor reading ability affects many, perhaps all, other aspects of the child's academic achievement. In fact, there are now in the courts important test cases in which parents are suing school districts for failing to teach their children to read. It is not surprising that the subject of reading receives by far the greatest amount of attention in the literature on paraprofessionals.

The specific types of activities to be performed by reading paraprofessionals are numerous. Fillmer suggests the following list, but advises school districts and classroom teachers to identify 10 or 20 specific professional activities that *they* wish paraprofessionals to perform:

- Constructing games
- Organizing field trips
- Working with individuals
- Observing behavior
- Reading stories
- Keeping records
- Evaluating performances
- Reinforcing skills
- Stimulating discussions

The astute reader will notice that the content of this list has been determined to a considerable degree by Fillmer's desire to shape it into the acronym COWORKERS.

Perhaps you prefer CHIME as contributed by Bernard:

- Check records and tests
- Help with supervision of children
- Instruct, tutor, and teach
- Materials development
- Equipment retrieval and use

Acronyms aside, many of these activities are applicable to other areas of the curriculum and to extracurricular and service roles as well.

One type of reading project concentrates on the teaching method employed, namely, paraprofessional tutorial instruction. There are many kinds of retarded readers—dyslexic children, children with perceptual problems, those who are emotionally disturbed, disruptive children, and those who have been inappropriately taught—not to mention those with additional “handicaps” such as truancy or being nonnative speakers. Some educators feel that a tutorial approach is the only way to meet the varying needs of these poor readers.

McCleary, for example, describes a programmed tutorial project in the Lenoir County Schools (North Carolina) in which tutors are trained specifically what to teach and how to teach it. Two results of this program are highly commendable:

(1) the greatest gains in reading achievement were made by the poorest readers, and (2) both teachers and control children, despite earlier hesitation, later insisted that all students be included in the "special" reading program. A pleasant side effect was the marked improvement in self-image shown by the pupils in the reading program.

This and other tutorial programs suggest that the reason students respond to such help is related less to the particular teaching methods employed than it is to the changed student-teacher relationship. Pupils improve primarily because of the encouragement and personal attention they receive.

Based on estimates that at least one-fourth of the nation's students have "significant reading deficiencies" that create a "barrier to success," some urban districts see reading retardation as directly related to such social problems as unemployment and high crime rates. A study reported by Rist suggests that the combination of black studies materials and black paraprofessionals "may provide the necessary ingredients for the formulation of a successful reading program." It is noteworthy that students in this reading program did not experience the seemingly inevitable "regress phenomenon." That is, unlike their counterparts without such reading assistance, their reading level did not "slip" (a nationwide phenomenon among black students first noted in the well-known Coleman Report), but in fact made substantial gains.

The use of paraprofessionals in reading programs exemplifies their use in other curricular areas. As the preceding examples illustrate, success is related to many factors and can be revealed in both academic and nonacademic environments.

AIDE SELECTION: AVOIDING ARBITRARY RESTRICTIONS

Aide selection is more difficult than one might think. Schools cannot just open their doors, call for help, and expect a flood of first-rate volunteers. Neither can they assume that certain types of people should be excluded from the paraprofessional ranks. The necessity for minimum standards may seem so self-evident as not to require discussion, but a look at existing paraprofessional programs reveals that too many have not given the topic enough thought. The following is a composite of minimum qualification criteria proposed by various programs:

- high school diploma
- ability to relate well to people
- good health and vitality
- emotional stability
- knowledge of professional ethics
- no felony record or other "trouble"
- age 18 to 50
- native English speaker
- ability to set a "role example"

Other qualifications could be added to this list, but these are representative.

Some of these qualifications do not belong on any list of selection criteria. For instance, how can emotional stability be measured? What does a high school diploma have to do with helping others? What is wrong with 15- and 55-year-olds? The particular tasks and responsibilities of the paraprofessionals vary, and so should the qualifications; few blanket regulations can be set up for all paraprofessional personnel in the school.

It should also be remembered that the desires as well as the abilities of paraprofessionals differ. Some prefer to work with other groups of adults, some want to interact with children, and some are perfectly happy working in isolation.

Distinctions can also be made between those who want limited responsibility and those who hope to gradually increase their level of responsibility. Thus, while knowledge of professional ethics or the ability to relate well to people or to set a role example *may* be related to a paraprofessional's success, such criteria may also be totally irrelevant.

There are also important instances in which what is usually considered a liability is precisely the characteristic that makes a person best suited for a particular paraprofessional role. An obvious example is the inadvisability of restricting paraprofessionals to native English speakers in schools where bilingualism would be a decided advantage. The exclusion of three stigmatized groups—the old, the young, and the mentally retarded—who have special abilities or talents to offer has been traditional in all areas of responsibility.

The Elderly

American society is well aware that it is not particularly kind to its elderly population; the elderly are regarded as nuisances, and consequently they often feel useless. One way of overcoming this is to find a group who needs them as much as the elderly need contact with others. Several types of institutions are finding ways to make mutually beneficial situations for their inmates and the elderly: surrogate grandparents from retirement homes have been matched up with orphans and with severely handicapped children.

Schools are also learning to take advantage of the storytelling abilities, hobbies, and other interests of older adults. Lanni and Strachan describe a program that is especially interesting for its two-fold purpose. Besides finding a place for the elderly, the program consists of a seven-week unit called "Sensitivity to the Aging Process" that utilizes live models from a nearby retirement home as classroom aides. The program is motivated not by sympathy for the aged but by concern for the attitudes of children toward aging and death. It should have far-reaching and lasting consequences for both pupils and aides.

Students—Fast and Slow Learners

Another source of paraprofessional help is students. The benefits of using bright teenagers to help work with younger ones have been documented by Schubert and by Knighton. Pisarchick describes a project in which high school students work as teacher aides in special classes for the mentally retarded. Not only are the students capable of helping younger children, but it is a successful learning experience for them.

In fact, there is really no reason that younger students should not become paraprofessionals. According to Elliott, one elementary school started out with a parent participation project and later extended the project to include "student partners." The grade level of the students ranged from four to six. Their duties consisted of tutoring kindergarten and first-grade children in handwriting, mathematics, and reading, and of assisting the teacher in planning and record-keeping. An even more important aspect of the program was what the student partners gained from their experiences: self-confidence, pride, and improved skills in the subjects tutored.

If these are the benefits in store for student paraprofessionals, then why limit them to bright or average students? In fact, why not make sure that students experiencing academic difficulty are included in such programs? A pilot program in Pleasant Hill, Oregon, has already demonstrated that poor students who act as tutors for their peers improve their own skills as well. Just as student paraprofessional programs should not exclude "slow learners," neither should they be limited to them. Otherwise the program runs the risk of suffering a "spoiled image." That is, the program will be marked as only for the "dumb" kids. The same principles apply when students are used to help control classroom behavior.

Another type of potential paraprofessional is perhaps the most stigmatized of all. Actually it is just an extension of the previous category of students who do not do well in school. These "slow learners," with IQs ranging between 70 and 90, are usually labeled as the "educable mentally retarded (EMR)." Orvis reports on a highly successful program using

these "former castaways" in the classroom. When Dr. Judith Krane, a child development specialist and a New York University professor of education, suggested that these young people be trained to become nursery school aides, her colleagues were shocked. But the EMRs not only became successful aides, they also changed from people "painfully aware of their failures, . . . the most unhappy and neglected children in our schools," to happy, poised, useful human beings.

Convicted Felons: An Exception

Excluding all stigmatized groups would rob the school of some of its best paraprofessionals and the "unqualified" applicants of personally rewarding experiences. However, in the case of convicted felons an exception must be made.

On the positive side, the use of former drug addicts—narcotic and alcoholic—to lead drug education programs is well known. It is no secret that ex-addicts are often the most effective teachers about the dangers of drugs. Furthermore, few people are naive enough to think that elementary grades are too early to begin a paraprofessional drug education program.

But other factors seem to rule out their use, at least at the elementary school level. Even if parents could be convinced that these felons would be helping rather than harming their children, state laws would probably not permit them to supervise a group of school children in any way. One alternative might be to let parents and other paraprofessionals, acting as intermediaries, learn from those who know the answers and in turn teach elementary pupils.

Business People, Academicians, and Housewives

Other types of people, not regarded as "second-class citizens," are nevertheless often ignored as potential school paraprofessionals. For instance, the business and academic worlds are sources of paraprofessional volunteers. Successful recruitment from "big business"—Eastern Airlines, Bell Telephone, and Gulf Oil—has taken place in Dade County, Florida (see "Big Business Comes to the Aid of Recruitment").

Milgram and Sciarra describe a Cincinnati program that uses the services of office workers whose employers give them time off during office hours to do volunteer work in the schools. School board members—and the schools they serve—can also profit from volunteer paraprofessional work, as evidenced by a Portland, Oregon, board member in an article entitled "This Boardman Gets in on the Action."

The emphasis on new types of paraprofessional recruits should not obscure long-standing sources. School districts should not give in to the temptation of taking for granted those who are "only" housewives. The district must meet its paraprofessional needs from whatever quarter it can. New sources of recruits do not make the older ones less valuable.

To Pay or Not To Pay

While considering the selection and placement of paraprofessional aides, school districts must make other important decisions about whether they want volunteer or paid employees, and whether they want loyalty or mobility from their aides. In a speech to mental health professionals, Allen discusses both of these topics. The question of compensation is not merely one of what the school district can afford. The more a district relies on its paraprofessionals, the more likely it is that they will expect to be paid (or given raises).

Right now adult paraprofessionals are unionizing, demanding/seizing power, claiming decision-making rights and responsibilities, and, in some cases, charging the Establishment with exploitation. The payment of paraprofessionals has become as much an ethical as an economic problem.

Regarding the mobility of aides, Allen asks districts not to make their paraprofessional programs deadends, but rather to encourage their *best* trainees to leave—a difficult request to fill. If a career ladder program is in operation, trainers of paraprofessionals should also make sure there is a market for the people they train. Nothing destroys preparation and eagerness like an "underwhelming" job market.

PROBLEMS AND CONCERNS: RELATIONSHIPS, CERTIFICATION, AND THE LAW

On the first day of school each year thousands of paraprofessionals and teachers meet for the first time. Usually in such cases neither the paraprofessional nor the teacher is prepared for their meeting or knows how to work properly with the other person. This lack of preparation leads to the misuse of both the paraprofessional and the teacher and exacerbates the situation where teachers are resisting the introduction of paraprofessionals.

These conflicts and misuses of talent have prompted an examination of paraprofessional and professional training. Some people have gone so far as to suggest the certification of paraprofessionals as a way of controlling the quality of their training. This is not only a consideration of educational quality but is also, in many cases, a matter of some legal concern.

Relationships with Teachers

Many teachers welcome the addition of paraprofessionals to the staff. These teachers view paraprofessionals as partners in the task of educating children. A large number of teachers, however, resent or fear paraprofessionals. The fear and resentment often have their source in past patterns of teacher assignment. Most teachers have spent their careers teaching alone in a self-contained classroom. They have not had to share their students with anyone nor have they had to work closely with other adults. When faced with another adult, these teachers can become insecure and fear or resent what they consider to be the intruder in their classroom.

There are, of course, other reasons for teachers to resist paraprofessionals. Lefkowitz lists five negative aspects of aide programs: teachers perceive paraprofessionals as a threat to

their professional autonomy and do not use them effectively; training programs are inadequate to prepare the two parties to cooperate; paraprofessional standards vary a great deal; there may be competition between professionals and paraprofessionals for the limited educational dollar; and boards of education may decide that many educational tasks do not require a teacher and can adequately be performed by a paraprofessional.

The fear that paraprofessionals may replace teachers or be paid money that otherwise would go to teachers is fairly widespread and accounts for three of Lefkowitz's five points. This fear is heightened by the large number of certificated people who do not have jobs and the reluctance of the voters to approve school budgets. Often, teachers see paraprofessionals as a source of cheap labor that can be hired to do their work.

These fears and resentments must be dispelled if a school is to use aides. An effective way to overcome the fear about paraprofessionals in a staff is to make aides available to those teachers who recognize their value and ask for them. If these teachers make good use of paraprofessionals, other teachers may follow suit and a school's educational program may be improved.

Once it is decided that aides are to be used in a school, teachers must be prepared to work with them, and the paraprofessionals must be prepared to assume their duties. Although colleges and universities are beginning to introduce preparatory classes for both teachers and aides, these classes are yet few and far between. Individual schools can do little about the inadequacies at the university level, but they can take effective steps at the local level.

The basic necessities of a teacher/paraprofessional training program are laid out by Albert Shanker as interviewed by Leanna Landsmann in an *Instructor* magazine.

It really takes a certain amount of training for paraprofessionals and teachers to be able to work together. They need an opportunity to talk to each other about sharing responsibilities before they step into the classroom. This important relationship

shouldn't have to begin the first day of school in front of a roomful of kids. There should be some training money; a program that allows them to talk and plan and get to know each other. There probably ought to be an opportunity for both the teacher and paraprofessional to visit schools where such teams have been working together for a period of time.

Shanker's remarks have validity for all levels of paraprofessional use but were intended for a situation in which an aide and a teacher share responsibilities within a classroom. This is not as common as the case in which a team or group of teachers share an aide, but it is increasingly common in differentiated staffing programs and at the elementary level generally.

In another article in the same magazine, "What Do You Do Before You Say Hello?," more elaborate programs for the preparation of paraprofessionals are outlined, and some guidelines for the establishing of a program are given. In Salem, Oregon, while Career Opportunities Program (COP) aides are taking classes to prepare for full-time careers, teachers are taking classes that prepare them to work efficiently with the aides. The teachers' classes stress the higher-level tasks that teachers can perform while aides act as support by doing tasks the teachers formerly performed.

The article emphasizes that expectations of and guidelines for a paraprofessional program should be made clear early in the program and recommends that guidelines be made into a handbook or reference sheet. The suggestions for implementing a program stress three areas: establishing favorable teacher attitudes toward aides, clarifying duties and working on communication skills, and examining the managerial skills teachers will need when working with paraprofessionals.

Certification of Paraprofessionals

A few writers concerned with the quality of paraprofessional programs have advocated the certification of aides. The supporters of such a plan emphasize that a certification would ensure adequate training of paraprofessionals. It is maintained

that such training programs would also encourage paraprofessionals to continue their education and to become teachers.

There is, of course, opposition to the idea of certifying aides. Much of it sounds the same as the opposition to paraprofessionals in general: if paraprofessionals are certified they will be in direct competition with teachers; certification will encourage paraprofessionals to go on to teaching, causing a high turnover rate; and a career ladder will add even more teachers to an already overcrowded field.

Perhaps a more persuasive objection to certifying paraprofessionals is that in most cases it is unnecessary and in many cases may even be harmful. Mauser notes that "tutor training sessions included in the highly successful programmed tutoring approach in reading reported by Ellson, Harris and Barber (1968) did not require anywhere near a 2-year program."

The concern over credentialing aides could also produce a negative effect on successful programs that use indigenous poor. Part of the success in a number of aide programs is attributable to the aide being unlike the teacher and for that reason able to have a great effect on students. Credentialing is an understandable attempt to set standards for aides, but, as was pointed out above, many successful aides could not meet "normal" standards because of their age, educational background, IQ, and similar reasons.

If credentialing is to be considered, a program such as that suggested by Hayen might be best. His program is unique in that it places the chief responsibility for the recruiting, training, and placing of entry-level aides with the local school district. Such a program may be flexible enough not to ignore pools of recruits that might be excluded by more structured, university-based selection procedures.

Some Legal Problems

Paraprofessional use has far outstripped the law's recognition of it. In articles by Sawin, Walden, and Charles and Dan Tollett, the point is made that laws on paraprofessionals are usually nonexistent or inadequate.

The Tolletts have broken down the state regulations concerning paraprofessionals and provide a chart that indicates whether a state's laws recognize teacher aides, permit or license aides, certify aides, or allow the local board of education to determine the status of aides. Despite recent legislation, the Tolletts emphasize that "only 23 states have laws or state board of education policies defining the legal status of paraprofessionals." Many states leave the district and/or the paraprofessional wide open to law suits.

The question of certification arises often in such discussions because, as Walden observes, "In all states, certain tasks may be performed only by certified personnel." The courts have often found that paying noncertified personnel to perform duties considered to be within the province of certified personnel constitutes illegal expenditure of public funds.

Writers on the legal status of the schools and paraprofessionals warn districts that they must be aware of the legal implications in the use of aides. School administrators should examine state laws to find where their state stands. In the absence of clear and comprehensive laws and regulations, the local district must assume the responsibility for ensuring that much care is taken not to leave the school or paraprofessional open to legal action. Until legal definitions of paraprofessionals and their roles are spelled out, it would be wise to follow Walden's advice:

At the school level, the principal would be well advised to make certain that both aides and teachers know the scope of the paraprofessionals' duties and responsibilities. It would be advisable, too, if teacher aides were provided with instruction on how to deal with common situations such as, for example, pupil injury, misbehavior by children, and responsibilities children may or may not assume. For the protection of children, teacher aides, and certified personnel, the teacher aide should have knowledge of his rights, authority, and responsibilities. With a modicum of foresight and a generous supply of common sense, the principal can prevent any legal problems from arising.

CONCLUSION

There is some irony associated with the attempts of educators to define what a paraprofessional is and does when the same educators have not been able to adequately define what a professional is. The irony has not gone unnoticed.

Unfortunately, this preoccupation with defining the role of the paraprofessional in conceptual terms often distracts from what is being accomplished by aides. In education, as is frequently observed, practice is often ahead of theory; things are done and later understood and explained. Such is the case with paraprofessionals.

Any attempt to provide a definitive explanation of the tasks aides can successfully perform would probably be more limiting than descriptive. In some sense the use of paraprofessionals is still experimental. Aides are successfully performing a multitude of clerical, instructional, and supportive tasks in the school and out in the community. At the same time there are a good number of problems relating to the training, selection, assignment, and legal status of paraprofessionals and to their relationships with teachers.

To understand paraprofessionals, one must look at the specifics of the successes, the failures, and the unresolved issues and problems. The diversity in the successes and failures should be encouraging. The absence of agreement over the exact nature of the paraprofessional and his role leaves the staff of each school free to establish its own limits rather than forcing it to accept a limited orthodoxy. Within the restraints of applicable law, the paraprofessional is and does what the administrators, teachers, and aides in a school determine he is and does.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Many of the items listed in this bibliography are indexed in ERIC's monthly catalogs *Resources in Education (RIE)* and *Current Index to Journals in Education (CIJE)*. Reports in *RIE* are indicated by an "ED" number; journal articles in *CIJE* are indicated by an "EJ" number.

Copies of most ERIC reports, but not journal articles, can be ordered from the ERIC Document Reproduction Service. If a report is available from EDRS, its order number and prices are given. When ordering, please specify the "ED" number. Unless otherwise noted, reports are available in both microfiche (MF) and paper copy (HC). Please include check or money order payable to EDRS.

Postage must be added to the cost of all orders. Rates are as follows. Microfiche: \$0.18 for up to 60 fiche and \$0.08 for each additional 60. Paper copy: \$0.18 for first 60 pages and \$0.08 for each additional 60.

Address requests to EDRS, P.O. Box 190, Arlington, Virginia 22210.

- Allen, Dean A. "Peer Counselling and Professional Responsibility." Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American College Health Association, Atlanta, April 1972. Amherst: University of Massachusetts, 1972. 12 pages. ED 066 679 MF \$0.75 HC \$1.50.
- Atchley, Robert C. "Can Programs for the Poor Survive in Middle-Class Institutions?" *Phi Delta Kappan*, 53, 4 (December 1971), pp. 243-244. EJ 049 308.
- Bernard, Donald. ["Paraprofessionals Can CHIME In."] *Instructor*, 83, 3 (November 1973), p. 46.
- "Big Business Comes to the Aid of Recruitment." *Nation's Schools*, 91 (June 1973), p. 50.
- Breivogel, William F., and others. "The Florida Parent Education Model as an Agent of Change." Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Psychological Association, Miami Beach, September 1970. 29 pages. ED 043 061 MF \$0.75 HC \$1.85.
- Canady, Robert Lynn. "Needed: Greater Differentiation of Paraprofessional Roles in Education." *Catalyst for Change*, 2, 1 (Winter 1973), pp. 22-24. EJ 075 162.
- Canady, Robert Lynn, and Seyfarth, John T. "Teacher-Administrator Expectations in Defining Roles for Paraprofessionals." *Education*, 92, 3 (February-March 1972), pp. 99-102. EJ 056 509.

- Carlson, Jon, and Peitrosfesa, John J. "A Trilevel Guidance Structure: An Answer to our Apparent Ineffectiveness." *Elementary School Guidance and Counseling*, 5, 3 (March 1971), pp. 190-194. EJ 032 952.
- Coleman, Peter. *The Teacher Aide and the Professional Association: A Policy for the Future*. Vancouver, British Columbia: British Columbia Teacher's Federation, 1971. 27 pages. ED 054 061 MF \$0.75 HC \$1.85.
- Cowen, Emory L., and others. "Utilization of a Nonprofessional Child-Aide School Mental Health Program." *Journal of School Psychology*, 9, 2 (1971), pp. 131-136. EJ 044 398.
- Elliott, David L. *Project 88: Parent Participation in the Elementary School*. Richmond, California: Richmond Unified School District, 1972. 23 pages. ED 071 751 MF \$0.75 HC \$1.50.
- Fillmer, H. Thompson. "Professional Reading Activities for Paraprofessionals." *Reading Teacher*, 26, 8 (May 1973), pp. 806-809. EJ 080 286.
- Findley, Dale, and Henson, Kenneth T. "Teacher Aides: Should They Be Certified?" *Contemporary Education*, 42, 4 (February 1971), pp. 177-180. EJ 035 543.
- Fo, Walter S. O., and O'Donnell, Clifford R. *The Buddy System Model: Community-Based Delinquency Prevention Utilizing Indigenous Nonprofessionals as Behavior Change Agents*. 1972. 29 pages. ED 074 394 MF \$0.75 HC \$1.85.
- Foster, Herbert L. "To Reduce Violence: The Interventionist Teacher and Aide." *Phi Delta Kappan*, 53, 1 (September 1971), pp. 59-62. EJ 043 661.
- Francies, Hallie, and Fleming, Margaret. *Nutritional Improvement Project, DPPF, Fund 97 Component 4: 1971-72 Evaluation*. Cleveland: Division of Research and Development, Cleveland Public Schools, 1973. 14 pages. ED 078 103 MF \$0.75 HC \$1.50.
- Gudridge, Beatrice M. "Paraprofessionals in School." *Education Digest*, 38, 1 (September 1972), pp. 23-25. EJ 063 889.
- Hayen, Frederick V. "A Plan for State Certification of Auxiliary School Personnel." *Journal of Research and Development in Education*, 5, 2 (Winter 1972), pp. 76-82.
- Ianni, Mary Ellen, and Strachan, Margaret Pitcairn. "In Loco Grandparentis." *Instructor*, 82, 6 (February 1973), pp. 174-175. EJ 070 318.

- Jacobson, Claire, and Drije, Carla. "Role Relations between Professionals and Paraprofessionals in Head Start." *Journal of Research and Development in Education*, 5, 2 (Winter 1972), pp. 95-100. EJ 056 685.
- Knighton, Walter B. "Help Wanted Students May Apply." *Science Teacher*, 37, 9 (December 1970), pp. 16-17. EJ 033 169.
- Lefkowitz, Leon J. "Paraprofessionals: An Administration/School Board Conspiracy?" *Phi Delta Kappan*, 54, 8 (April 1973), pp. 546-547. EJ 078 495.
- Lum, Margaret C. "Current Concepts in the Use of Nonprofessional Assistants in School Health Services - A Selected Review." *Journal of School Health*, 43, 6 (June 1973), pp. 357-361. EJ 082 527.
- Mausser, August J. "The Paraprofessional Panacea or Frankenstein?" *Contemporary Education*, 42, 3 (January 1971), pp. 139-141. EJ 032 417.
- McCleary, Emily Knott. "Report of Results of Tutorial Reading Project." *Reading Teacher*, 24, 6 (March 1971), pp. 556-559. EJ 035 679.
- Michael, Elizabeth B., compiler. *The Use of Educational Paraprofessionals: A Selected Annotated Bibliography*. Urbana, Illinois: ERIC Clearinghouse on Early Childhood Education, 1972. 16 pages. ED 059 785 MF \$0.75 HC \$1.50. (Also available from College of Education Curriculum Laboratory, University of Illinois, 1210 West Springfield Avenue, Urbana, Illinois 61801. \$0.35.)
- Milgram, Joel, and Sciarra, Dorothy June. "From Office Desk to Day Care Center." *Children Today*, 1 (May-June 1972), pp. 12-13.
- Miller, James Lee. *A Comparison of How First Grade Classroom Teachers with and without Full Time Teacher Aides Utilize Instructional Time and the Effect of Aide Utilization upon Academic Performance of Children*. n.p.: 1970. 194 pages. ED 043 595 MF \$0.75 HC \$9.00.
- Orvis, Pat. "Slow Learners." *Illinois Teacher*, 17, 1 (September-October 1973), pp. 23-30. EJ 083 784. (Also in *Saturday Review*, 55, 4 [October 14, 1972], pp. 57-62.)
- Panther, Edward E. "Counselors and Legislators: A Case History." *Personnel and Guidance Journal*, 50, 8 (April 1972), pp. 667-671. EJ 054 951.
- "Paraprofessional Training Project-R: Probing the Roots of Reading Failure." *Reading Newsreport*, 6, 6 (April 1972), pp. 24-28. EJ 064 970.

- Pisarchick, Sally. "Project Support: Teens Turn Paraprofessional." *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 4, 2 (Winter 1972), pp. 66-70. EJ 051 945.
- Poulos, Nicholis. *Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations Based on the Evaluation of the Great Cities School Service Assistants Project, School Community Assistants Component*. Detroit: Department of Research and Development, Detroit Public Schools, 1971. 24 pages. ED 060 138 MF \$0.75 HC \$1.50.
- Rist, Ray C. "Black Studies and Paraprofessionals: A Prescription for Ailing Reading Programs in Urban Black Schools." *Journal of Reading*, 14, 8 (May 1971), pp. 525-530, 583. EJ 038 493.
- Sawin, James D. "Your Next Legal Headache? The Touchy Topic of Teacher Aides Is a Good Prospect." *American School Board Journal*, 158, 11 (May 1971), p. 23. EJ 037 956.
- Schubert, Leo. "Students Teach Students." *Science Teacher*, 37, 9 (December 1970), pp. 15-16. EJ 033 168.
- Shanker, Albert, and Landsmann, Leanna. "Paraprofessionals Are Often the Best PR People Teachers Have." *Instructor*, 83, 3 (November 1973), pp. 40-42.
- Templeton, Ian. *Paraprofessionals. Educational Management Review Series Number 11*. Eugene, Oregon: ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management, University of Oregon, 1972. 10 pages. ED 071 145 MF \$0.75 HC \$1.50.
- "This Boardman Gets in on the Action." *American School Board Journal*, 158, 12 (June 1971), p. 20. EJ 039 790.
- Tollett, Charles, and Tollett, Dan. "Teacher Aide Laws Are a Mess—And an Invitation to Legal Troubles for School Districts." *American School Board Journal*, 161, 7 (June 1974), pp. 29-32.
- Walden, John C. "Paraprofessional Personnel and the Law: Some Tentative Answers." *National Elementary Principal*, 51, 5 (February 1972), pp. 100-102.
- "What Do You Do Before You Say Hello?" *Instructor*, 83, 3 (November 1973), pp. 44-45.
- Zimpfer, David, and others. *Support Personnel in School Guidance Programs*. Washington, D.C.: Association for Counselor Education and Supervision, 1970. 194 pages. ED 042 066 MF \$0.75 HC \$9.00.